



IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Applicants: Sai P. Katikaneni, et al.
Serial No.: 10/628,653
For: HIGH-CAPACITY SULFUR ABSORBENT BED AND GAS
DESULFURIZATION METHOD
Filed: July 28, 2003
Examiner: Frank M. Lawrence, Jr.
Art Unit: 1724

Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313

Sir:

RESPONSE TO RESTRICTION REQUIREMENT

In response to the restriction requirement in the Office Action dated December 23, 2004, applicants provisionally elect, for further prosecution in the subject application the invention of the Group I claims, i.e., claims 1-30. Applicants further respectfully traverse the Examiner's restriction requirement.

Applicant notes that 35 USC § 121 allows the Commissioner to restrict an application to one invention if two or more independent and distinct inventions are claimed in the application. Section 802.01 of the MPEP states that the term "distinct" means that "two or more subjects as disclosed are related, for example, as combination and part (subcombination) thereof, process and apparatus for its practice, process and product made, etc. but are capable of separate manufacture, use, or sale as claimed, AND ARE PATENTABLE (novel and

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unobvious) OVER EACH OTHER (through they may each be unpatentable because of the prior art).”

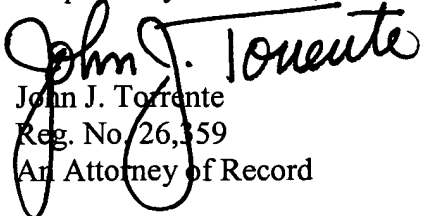
It is believed clear that the fuel processing system of the Group I claims and the fuel processing method of the Group II claims are related to one another in that the fuel processing system claims recite substantially the like features. It also believed evident that because of reciting such like features the claims are not patentable over each other. The Group I and II claims, therefore, do not claim independent and distinct inventions, as required by 35 USC § 121.

Moreover, the Examiner has argued that the apparatus as claimed can be used to practice a different process, such as the purification or separation of non-fuel fluid mixtures such as air, hydrocarbons, or inert gases. However, this argument would apply to the recited method, as well. Accordingly for this reason also, applicants believe that the Group I and Group II claims are not independent and distinct and should be both examined in the subject application.

Dated: February 23, 2005

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Respectfully submitted,


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